

H.E. Holmes

Livable Center Initiative Study

Executive Summary, December 2002

Shirley Franklin
Mayor, City of Atlanta



Atlanta City Council
Cathy Woolard
President of Council

Carla Smith
Debi Starnes
Ivory Young, Jr.
Cleta Winslow
Natalyn Archibong
Anne Fauver
Howard Shook
Clair Muller
Felicia Moore
C.T. Martin
Jim Maddox
Derrick Boazman
Ceasar Mitchell
Mary Norwood
H. Lamar Willis

Department of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Conservation; Bureau of Planning
Charles C. Graves Commissioner
Beverly Dockeray-Ojo, Acting
Director
City of Atlanta DPDNC



Introduction

The City of Atlanta Department of Planning, Development and Neighborhood Conservation engaged the services of Tunnell Spangler Walsh & Associates to study the H.E. Holmes MARTA station area in support of the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI). The main goal of the LCI is to identify projects that encourage diversity and intensity of land use in close proximity to transit stations as a way to promote a balanced ratio of housing and employment, enhance community identity, and provide non-motorized mobility opportunities.

The LCI study area is approximately .8 square miles and surrounds the H.E. Holmes MARTA rail station. Its boundaries are I-20 to the North, the properties abutting Holmes Drive and Peyton Road to the East, Peyton Road and the Peyton Forest Element-

ary School to the south, and Lynhurst Drive and the properties abutting Linkwood Road to the west.

Through analysis of existing conditions, economic development, land use and market conditions, this study provides suggestions for enhancing the quality of life for the residents and merchants within the area. The study suggests tools and guidelines for enhancing the livability of this community through transportation, infrastructure, urban design and economic development initiatives, creating a true mixed-use activity node.

There is a important balance between new projects and impacts to the existing infrastructure. This study achieved this balance through examination of historical context and existing conditions, adherence to sound urban planning and design principles, and citizen input.



Vision: To encourage large numbers of people living, working and playing within walking distance of a medium density mixed-use transportation node where a wider variety of goods, services and recreational facilities are available. Improved pedestrian circulation and sense of community should be achieved through integration of multi-use trails, parks and open space.

H.E. Holmes



Study Area Components

- Holmes Dr. & MLK Jr. Dr. Intersection
- MLK Jr. Dr. Commercial Corridor
- Adjacent Residential Neighborhoods
- Shopping Centers
 - Westridge Shopping Center
 - Hightower Station
 - Gordon Plaza

H.E. Holmes Existing Strengths

- Stable single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods.
- Easy access to downtown Atlanta as well as to employment centers throughout the region via I-20 and MARTA rail and bus.
- Home prices and rents are generally more affordable than housing in other intown neighborhoods.
- High occupancy rates for area shopping centers.
- Scheduled to receive Capital Improvement and Quality of Life Bond funds.



H.E. Holmes Goals

- Encourage a diversity of medium to high-density mixed income housing options.
- Develop alternatives for underutilized or vacant properties.
- Provide for alternative travel modes to improve access.
- Increase employment, shopping, and recreation options.
- Conserve natural resources.
- Create a community identity via creation of gateways.

H.E. Holmes

Concept Plan– Key Concepts

- Define a neighborhood that balances the needs of pedestrians, bicycles, transit and drivers
- Create an interconnected street network that supports pedestrians as well as shorter local auto trips & transit
- Propose a mix of land uses transitioning from medium-density mixed-use and multi-family closes to the MARTA station, to single-family homes at the edges, interspersed with neighborhood retail nodes
- Protect existing single-family neighborhoods and sensitively integrate them into the community plan
- Encourage a diversity of new housing types and price points to reflect changing demographic needs, community desires and the requirements to support a mixed-use environment
- Create a series of intimately scaled public squares, parks, community focal points, greenways, and natural open spaces



H.E. Holmes

Concept Plan Highlights

Organizational Framework– Small Blocks and Streets

- A & B Streets

Open Space Framework– Public Spaces for All

- Linear Park & Retention Pond Park

Bicycle Facilities– Making Cycling Safe and Convenient

- Extending City Greenway Plan & Installing Bike Racks

Land Use Framework– From Center to Edge

- Higher Intensity Near Transit, Lower Intensity in Residential Areas

The Town Center– The Heart of the Community

- Mixed-Use Center on MARTA property
- Potential for 80,000 sq ft retail/commercial; 53,000 sq ft office; 10,000 sq ft community center; 408 loft residences; new parking structures



Small Commercial Nodes– Convenience Goods and Services

- Hightower Station, MLK Dr./Harlan Rd, & Westridge Shopping Centers

MLK Jr. Drive– Taming the Arterial

- Reconstruction of Pedestrian Crossings & New Road Treatments

Traffic Calming–Respecting the Neighborhood's Quality of Life

- Arterial Median Treatments, Pedestrian-Oriented Median Entries on Side streets, and Traffic Tables

Residential Areas– Providing Options, Preserving Character

- 3 Floors for Multi-family, 199 New Townhomes, 1,092 New Flats
- 280 New single-family homes

Implementation

The Strategic Plan outlines a number of implementation strategies for the concept plan including:

- Regulatory Projects
- Transportation Projects
- Other Local Projects

Funding for the improvements identified in the plan come from a variety of sources. The number and extent of improvements indicate that no single implementing agency would be practical or adequate.

For more information on the H.E. Holmes LCI Study, please contact Flor Velarde (fvelarde@ci.atlanta.ga.us) or Stephanie Macari (smacari@ci.atlanta.ga.us) at 404.330.6145

To Access LCI Information on the Web:

- Go to: www.ci.atlanta.ga.us
- Choose "Planning & Neighborhood Development" from the pull-down list on the lower right side
- Click on "Planning" from the list on the left
- Click on "Redevelopment"
- Click on "Redevelopment Planning Programs & Projects"
- Choose an LCI